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WYOMING LABOR FORCE TRENDS

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NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT AT 6.0 PERCENT

The Nation's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from 5.8 percent in September to 6.0 percent in October. Recently released data puts November's rate at 5.8 percent. These rates remained in the 5.6 to 6.0 percent range that has prevailed for the past 14 months. November's drop has baffled the experts who have been predicting a recession, with a sharp increase in unemployment, based upon other economic indicators. Unemployment in October was lowest for adult men, 4.3 percent, and highest for teenagers, 16.6 percent.

WYOMING'S UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES AT LESS THAN HALF THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Since February of this year, nine consecutive months, statewide unemployment has registered half or less than half the national level. Reflecting the final days of an Indian Summer October's seasonally adjusted rate of 2.5 percent compares to 2.9 percent in September and 3.3 percent in October of 1978. The state's unadjusted level of 2.2 percent was down from 2.3 percent in the previous month and 2.9 percent the previous year. November will see a substantial gain in the number of unemployed.

In the latest available comparison with the other states, September, Wyoming's unemployment was the lowest in the nation for the sixth month in a row. New Hampshire and North Dakota ranked 49th among the states with rates of 2.4 percent and Michigan had the highest rate of 7.2 percent.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION HIGH IN STATE

In October, the U. S. labor force participation rate, which is a measure of the number of people in the labor force as a proportion of the entire non-institutional population, age 16 and over, was 63.7 percent. This compares to Wyoming's estimated rate of 70.6 percent. While the state's female participation rate is only around average, the male rate ranks as one of the highest in the nation. The current high growth rates in mining and construction, which employ predominantly men, a good number of whom are unmarried, would help to explain this statistic.

LABOR FORCE GAINS CONTINUE

The October labor force in Wyoming is estimated at 230,750, up almost four percent annually. Trade, mining and construction continue their 1979 trend and registered the largest worker gains in the employed labor force, estimated at 225,677, with annual gains of 5,800, 5,500 and 2,800 workers. Mining had the greatest percentage gain of any major industry, over 18 percent. Agricultural employment continued to show a slight annual gain of two percent.